

Dr. John Gerber

Dr. John Gerber was born September 8, 1796 in Bern, Switzerland. Because his family was well educated and part of the so-called upper class, John received an excellent education. He attended the University of Bern, and the Lutheran Missionary School in Basel. He became proficient in French, English, and German. He studied medicine and surgery in France.

In January 1822, John was ordained by the Protestant Lutheran Church and began his service in the English Bishopric Missionary Society of London. He was sent to West Africa to work with the natives. He was a great lover of the out of doors, and thus enjoyed his adventures in exploring these new areas. He served in his calling in Africa for ten years, as a doctor and school teacher, and minister. John was forced to leave his assignment there because of a severe case of yellow fever.

After recovering, Dr. Gerber traveled some in Europe, and then from England, sailed to America in 1834. He made his new home in Basel,

Ohio, resuming his labors as a traveling missionary and preacher doing some medical work as well.

After hearing about Joseph Smith and the LDS Church, John joined the church, and was treated as an outcast. He lost his position as a minister as well as his medical practice. Financial matters became very difficult, and to add to that problem, his home and all his earthly possessions were burned. He and his family then made plans to come to Utah, in 1854.

They arrived in Salt Lake City, took in the sights, and soon after joined a group going to settle in Cedar City. Five years later, he moved his family to Provo City, where he set up his medical practice.

In 1861, Dr. John Gerber moved his family to the Provo Valley, (Heber Valley), and made their home in the Upper Settlement. They were some of the original settlers of this area.

Dr. Gerber was married four times. His first two wives died in Africa, the third died in America, and the fourth, Anna Maria Ackert, outlived him, having made her home also in Midway.

Though practicing medicine in his new home, Dr. Gerber found it difficult to make a good living, as he received produce as payment for his services. In 1867, he moved his family to Salt Lake City, and leased his property in Mound City. There he devoted his entire time to his medical practice, and succeeded very well.

In 1867, the Gerbers again moved back to Mound City. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Gerber became very ill and died on November 22, 1870. He was buried in the old cemetery in the Upper Settlement on the foothills of west Midway. A pioneer memorial was erected as a tribute to Dr. Gerber and the others buried in the old cemetery.

Mary Clark Bronson

Edwin Bronson was born in Mentor, Ohio, on October 14, 1817, however, he spent most of his young life in Michigan. When he was 18 years old, he became a sailor, and later a captain, on a vessel on the Great Lakes. In 1849, at the age of 32, Edwin married Mary Clark, and they lived in Wyandotte, Michigan. They were the proud parents of seven children, four boys and three girls.

After their conversion to the LDS Church, the Bronson family sold their comfortable home and their cherished belongings, and traveled with the pioneers to Utah. During the journey, which took them ten weeks, Mary was very ill with typhoid fever for six weeks. Many times Edwin was ready to turn back so she could get medical help. But she insisted she "must get to Utah."

In the spring of 1861, the Bronson family moved to what was then

Norton Jacob added much to the life of early Midway, which those who live here now appreciate.

John Halmah Van Wagoner

John Halmah Van Wagoner, born September 1, 1811, in New Jersey, was married to five women, Eliza Smith, Clarissa Tappen, Elizabeth Young, Agnes Melbrose, and Zella Allen, and was the father of nineteen children. After joining the LDS Church, John sold his property in New Jersey in order to move to Nauvoo. He gave the church the \$500.00 he made on the deal, to help finance the immigrants.

John was a carpenter, cabinet maker, mill wright, wheel wright, and skilled mechanic. After arriving in Utah, John built flour mills in Fort Supply, Fort Bridger, Payson, Provo, Mt. Pleasant, and Midway.

In 1861, he moved his family to Midway, to the lower settlement. It is said that he built the first grist mill in the county. For this project, he hauled granite from American Fork, using two yokes of oxen. He then used a hammer and chisel to carve the mill wheel, to make it round. This same wheel is now on the top of the Daughters of the Pioneers monument on the Midway Town Square.

John busied himself with the building of homes, furniture and wagons. On several occasions, he furnished both oxen and wagons to bring immigrants from the Missouri River area to Utah.

John and his sons, David, William and Henry, were musicians, and they supplied the music for the dances in the valley in the early days.

He was a friend to all, including the Indians, and added much to the quality of life the early days of many hardships.

